

Tobey, Mark (1890-1976)
Centreville, Wisconsin

EDUCATION/INFLUENCES

- As child, attended Saturday classes at Art Institute of Chicago, otherwise self-taught.
- Influenced by Chinese calligraphy, Persian and Arabic script, wanted to express spirituality in his art.

BIG IDEAS/THEMES

- Bahai religion strongly influenced work-Persian religion that emphasized social-mindedness rather than theology and ritual-no clergy. Belief that no race/nation is superior-all enjoy equal opportunities and responsibilities. Also spent time in a Zen monastery.
- Emphasis on line, spontaneity, fluidity of forms, evenness of emphasis in overall composition, rhythmic vibrations
- “White Writing”-interlacing thousands of fine white lines, influence of calligraphy and ethnic textiles, pulled tracery back from edges of pictures to keep central image floating in space. All over style-influenced Pollock.

KIA WORK-*White Writing*, gouache, 1965

- In 1968, Mr. and Mrs. Gilmore purchased this Mark Tobey gouache from a New York collector and dealer for the KIA permanent collection as a memorial to Blanche Hull. Ms. Hull was early member of KIA, served as President of Board from 1930-36, instrumental in establishing permanent director position.

